

Rules for Alphabetic Filing**ARMA - Association of Records Managers and Administrators****BASIC PRINCIPLES:**

1. Alphabetize Unit by Unit
2. Consider second units only when the first units are identical
3. If names are identical, they may be distinguished by address:
 - City, State
 - Street Name (if a number treat it as written, figures precede street names)
 - by Direction
 - House or Building Number
4. Nothing comes before something
5. File under the most commonly used name or title and then cross-reference

PERSONAL NAMES:

1. Treat each part of a person's name as a separate unit for filing purposes use this order: Last name, First name, Initial.
Steve A. Jacobs Jacobs Steve A
2. When you are dealing with a foreign personal name and cannot tell the difference between last and first name then file the name in the order it is written.
Kwong Kow Ng Kwong Kow Ng
Phillip K. Ng Ng Phillip K
3. If a name consists of separate words – treat as a single unit.
Lopez y Quintana would be indexed as LopezyQuintana.
4. Consider a prefix as part of the name, not as a separate unit. Ignore variations in spacing, punctuation, and capitalization in names.
Examples: Del, De, Des, Di, El, La, Les, Lo, M, Mac, Mc, Saint, San, Santa, Santo, Ten, Ter, Van, Van de, Van der Von
Walter G. Mac Kay MacKay Walter G.
5. Consider the hyphenated elements of a name as a single unit – ignore the hyphen.
S. T. Smith-Powell SmithPowell S. T.

6. If a person is known by a nickname alone (Big Al) consider each word in the nickname as a separate unit as written. If the name begins with The treat The as the last unit.

Big Al	Big Al
The Tom and Jerry Show	Tom and Jerry Show The

7. A title such as Dr., Mayor, Miss, Mr., Mrs. may be used as the last filing unit.

Mayor Dale Jones	Jones Dale Mayor
------------------	------------------

8. When the titles above are used with only one part of a person's name, treat it as first unit.

Mayor Jones	Mayor Jones
Dr. Ruth	Dr. Ruth

9. Alphabetize a married woman's name on the basis of her own first name. However, consider the title Mrs. if a woman uses her husband's name.

Mrs. Shirley Reid	Reid Shirley
Mrs. Charles Reid	Reid Charles Mrs.

10. Consider designation following a person's name in order to distinguish names that are otherwise identical. (Jr., Sr., 2d, 3d, II, III, CPA, M.D., Ph.D.) Numeric designations precede alphabetic, Arabic preceded Roman numerals, and when dealing with ordinal numbers, such as 3rd or 4th, ignore the endings.

ORGANIZATIONAL NAMES:

1. Treat each word in the name of an organization as a separate unit and consider the units as written.

I Deal Card Shops	I Deal Card Shops
Ideal Printers	Ideal Printers

2. When alphabetizing, ignore all punctuation – for example, periods, commas, hyphens, apostrophes, and diagonals. When words are joined by a hyphen or a diagonal, treat the phrase as a single unit.

Baskin's Basket Shop	Baskins Basket Shop
O'Leary's Camera Shop	Olearys Camera Shop

3. Treat prepositions (such as **of** and **in**), conjunctions (such as **and** and **or**), and articles (**the**, **a**, and **an**) as separate units. When **The**, **a**, or **an** is the first word in a name, it as the last unit.

The Pen and Pencil Shop	Pen and Pencil Shop The
-------------------------	-------------------------

4. When an organizational name includes a person's name, consider the parts of the personal name in the order in which they are written. Ignore any punctuation.

Peter Saint Clair Insurance	Peter SaintClair Insurance
Mark G. Clausen Homes	Mark G Clausen Homes

5. Consider a title in an organization's name as a separate unit in the order in which it occurs. Treat abbreviated titles as they are written and ignore punctuation.

Capt. Jack Seafood	Capt Jack Seafood
--------------------	-------------------

6. Treat an abbreviation as a single unit. Consider it exactly as it is written, and ignore any punctuation.

AFL-CIO	AFLCIO
U. S. Data Source	U S Data Source
U.S. Data Files	US Data Files

7. Treat acronyms and the call letters of radio and TV stations as single units.

8. When the symbol **&** occurs in a name, consider it as if it were spelled out **and**. If the symbol is freestanding (that is, with space on either side), treat it as a separate filing unit.

A & L Fabrics	A and L Fabrics
AT&T	ATANDT

9. Treat single letters as separate units. If two or more letters in a sequence are written solid or are connected by a hyphen or a diagonal, treat the sequence as a single unit.

AAA	AAA
A&D Printers	AANDD Printers
A/Z Rental	AZ Rentals

10. Treat each part of a geographic name as a separate unit. However, treat hyphenated parts of a geographic name as a single unit.

Big Sur Tours	Big Sur Tours
Lake of the Woods	Lake of the Woods
Will-Barre Mills	WillBarre Mills
St. Louis Water Filters	StLouis Water Filters

11. Arabic numerals (1,2,3,4,5) and Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV, V) are considered separate units. Arabic numerals precede Roman numerals and those consisting of the alphabet. Numbers written out as words are alphabetized as spelled.

21st Century Travel	21 Century Travel
210th St. Assn.	210 St Assn
III Brothers Outlets	III Brothers Outlets
The VII Hills Lodge	VII Hills Lodge The
The IX Bookshop	IX Bookshop The
Sixth Street Fashions	Sixth Street Fashions

12. When an organizational name consists of a number (in figures or words) linked by a hyphen or diagonal – treat as a single unit.

1-A Trainers	1A Trainers
7-Eleven Food Store	7Eleven Food Store

13. When a phrase consists of a figure linked to another figure by hyphen or diagonal (for example 80-20 or 50/50 consider only the number that precedes the punctuation.

20-20 Eye Care	20 Eye Care
50/50 Chance Club	50 Chance Club

14. When a phrase consists of a figure plus a letter without space or punctuation treat the phrase as a single unit.

3M	3M
----	----

15. When a symbol appears with a number, treat the two elements as a single unit only if there is no space between the symbol and the number. Consider the symbol as if it were spelled out
% = percent, # = number or pound, \$ = dollar

The \$50 Shop	50Dollar Shop The
50% Off Outlet	50Percent Off Outlet
The 50+ Retirement Club	50Plus Retirement Club The
The #1 Pizza Parlor	Number1 Pizza Parlor The

GOVERNMENTAL NAMES:

Federal

- For any organization that is part of the federal government, consider **United States Government** as the first three units.
- Consider the name of the department, transposing Department of to the end.
- Next consider the name of the office or bureau within the department. Transpose opening phrases.

Bureau of Labor Statistics	Labor Statistics Bureau of
----------------------------	----------------------------

Office of Consumer Affairs	United States Government Consumer Affairs Office of
Federal Bureau of Investigation	United States Government Federal Bureau of Investigation
Food and Drug Administration	United States Government Food and Drug Administration

State & Local Government

4. For any organization (except an educational institution) that is part of a state, county, city, or town government, first consider the distinctive place name. Example: Iowa, Ottumwa, Wapello.
Iowa Division of Labor Iowa Labor Division of
Water Commission of Ottumwa Ottumwa City of Water Commission

© Shirley Reid and Indian Hills Community College